Footwear Park at Chennai

894. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to create a footwear park at Chennai;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when the park will be set up;

(d) whether footwear park will be accorded Special Economic Zone status;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government is implementing a Plan Scheme, namely, the "Infrastructure Strengthening of Leather Sector" (ISLS) and establishment of a Footwear Complex at Irungattukottai (near Chennai) is one of the subcomponents envisaged in the Scheme. The State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited (SIPCOT) is the implementing agency and has been assigned the task of preparing the Detailed Project Report which would *inter-alia* contain the expected date of completion of the Project.

(d) and (e) The Central Government has conveyed "in-principle" approval for setting up of a sector specific Special Economic Zone for Footwear sector over an area of 150 acres at Irungattukottai (near Chennai).

(f) Not applicable.

Import of natural rubber through STC

895. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether All India Rubber Industries Association has urged import of natural rubber through State Trading Corporation and the rubber so imported should be sold to small industries;

(b) if so, whether export of natural rubber has been urged to be discontinued;